

Tips for Hosting an Off-Camera Watch Party for a Global Webchat

Why host a viewing group or watch party for a webchat?

It's a great way to bring people together to network and foster dialogue on the topic. We always encourage posts to **hold a side-event** — a planned discussion before/after the virtual program, maybe with a local speaker on the ground or some other activity. This not only provides you with a "Plan B" in case the internet or electricity is disrupted, but also reinforces discussion of the topic and networking.

Before the Webchat — Tech Requirements

- **Test your connection and set-up** well before the day of the program. We recommend simulating everything exactly as it will be for the day of the livestream — using the same room, internet port (always use a wired Ethernet connection if at all possible) and equipment.
- Test your internet connection by going to ustream.com/nasa. If you can hear and see the livestream there OK, you should not have a problem with the program. You should have at least **1.5 Mbps** of upload/download speed, but for a smoother video feed we recommend **5 Mbps** upload/download. Go to speedtest.net to test your speed.
- Make sure your browser and Adobe Flash are up to date before the day of the program. **Do not use Internet Explorer or an OpenNet connection.**
 - Try to test the **same day and time** as the program will take place, as well. If there are other people who will be using the same internet network during the livestream, outside of your viewing group, try to restrict their internet usage if you notice their usage negatively affects your connection.
 - Use a **large monitor or projector** to display the webchat so people are not hunched around a computer if you have a large group.

Before the Webchat — Marketing

- Most large-scale webchats have a **social media toolkit**. If you don't have one, email your IIP regional office to ask for one.

The Day of the Webchat

Note: *Both the chat space and the video player will only appear on the page starting approximately a day before the webchat.*

- Start setting up early and make sure your watch party invitees are in place well before the webchat starts.
- If you are having tech issues the day of the program, please let IIP know in the chat space and someone from the IIP interactive team will message you with help.

- Log into the chat space on the program page as a watch party: Sign in as a “guest” — erase the generic “Guest1234” that appears when you click “guest” and name yourself something that identifies your location (like “IRCKampala” or “ASKarachi”).
 - You can **pop out the chat space** and make it bigger on the page, as well. Click on an icon on the lower right of the chat box that looks like a box with an arrow.
 - Introduce yourself in the chat space and let us know how many people are in your watch party.
 - You can designate a separate computer for the chat space, so individuals can come up and type in a question on behalf of the group, while the livestream is playing from a separate computer.
- Alternatively, people in the watch party can use their mobile devices to ask questions (via the chat space on the program page or via the program Twitter hashtag).
- To ask questions as a group on Twitter, use your post's Twitter handle and the program hashtag.
- Use the **audio-only player** on the page below the video player if there is a major problem with your connection on the day of the program that cannot be resolved.
- The video will have **captions** that you can activate by clicking on the CC icon on the video player. The video player will automatically adjust to your bandwidth restrictions.
- **Send a pic of your watch party**, before the program starts/during the first part of the program. We will try our best to show it during the livestream. You can use it to post on your social media accounts later, as well.
- The marketing materials will tell you whom to email. If you do not know, write a message in the chat space and we will private message you the email address.

After the Webchat

- If you want a recording, it will be on the webchat page within a few days of the live program. You can also email iipinteractive@state.gov for a link to the recording.

Find Out About Upcoming Webchats

- Follow IIP’s interactive team on Twitter [@USAinteracts](https://twitter.com/USAinteracts).
- Look for announcements in your IIP regional office newsletter.
- All REPs will be notified of upcoming virtual programs.
- Check out IIP’s [Interactive Program Calendar](#) to see what programs are scheduled. Promotional materials are available for download.